

# The African Buffalo Database: stepping towards a multi-species web-based platform

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**Abstract:** As with most African mammals, buffalo populations have undergone a severe reduction in size and geographical distribution since the 19th century. The last known continental abundance and distribution data has recently been updated for a review chapter on African buffalo. Although providing a useful basis for conservation, management and policy making, such updates result from individual or poorly coordinated efforts and give only snapshots with limited potential for analysis and dissemination. The IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) maintains the African Elephant Database (AED), likely the world's most comprehensive single-species database. As the formal repository of African elephant survey data, the AED, a spatially-enabled web platform, collates data at the site, national, sub-regional, and continental levels, as well as hosts an updated range map for the continent. Inspired by this example, both Antelope and African Elephant Specialist Groups seek to establish the foundation for ongoing data collection, integration, analysis, and dissemination on African Buffalo, in the framework of a Multi-Species Database (MSD). The MSD presents an unprecedented opportunity to build a platform for conservation decision-making at the landscape-level. This shared platform also has potential for integrating additional species and spatial covariates, supporting the objective of providing integrated, comprehensive syntheses for conservation purposes.

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